CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method of authenticating a user comprising the steps of:

providing a user unique identifier, the unique identifier comprising both a sequence of keystrokes and the inter-keystroke intervals associated with provision of those keystrokes;

comparing the unique identifier with a reference unique identifier by:

comparing the absolute inter-keystroke intervals of the unique identifier with the absolute inter-keystroke intervals of the reference unique identifier and returning a true indication if the absolute inter-keystroke interval of the unique identifier is within a predetermined tolerance of the absolute inter-keystroke interval of the reference identifier;

comparing the relative inter-keystroke intervals of the unique identifier with the relative inter-keystroke intervals of the reference unique identifier and returning a true indication if the relative inter-keystroke interval of the unique identifier is within a predetermined tolerance of the relative inter-keystroke interval of the reference identifier;

authenticating said user if both said absolute comparison step and said relative comparison step return a true indication.

2. A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said relative inter-keystroke intervals are the ratio of the inter-keystroke intervals and the inter-keystroke interval between entry of the first of said sequence of keystrokes and the second of said sequence of keystrokes.

3. A method as claimed in claim 1, further comprising the step of entry by the user of the reference unique identifier and wherein said predetermined tolerance is determined during said step of entry by the user of the reference unique identifier.

4. A method as claimed in claim 3 wherein said predetermined tolerance is explicitly set by the user.

5. The method of claim 4, wherein the unique identifier is provided by directly by the user.